
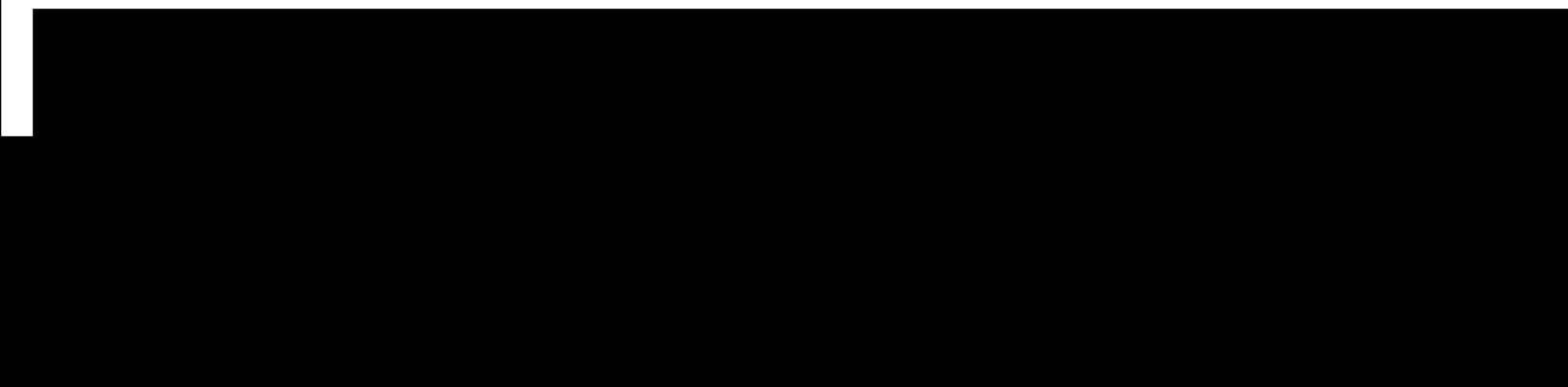


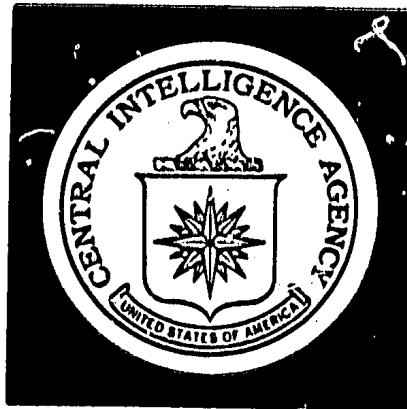


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

Rural-Urban Migration In Black Africa

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
December 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Rural-Urban Migration In Black Africa

Introduction

Urbanization in Black Africa is proceeding faster than in any other region. The proportion of the population living in cities of 20,000 and over rose about 50% between 1950 and 1960, and the trend to urbanization shows no signs of slowing down and may be accelerating. While natural population growth in the cities is at least as rapid as in the countryside, migration from rural areas accounts for the bulk of the increase in city dwellers.

A strong economic motive underlies most decisions to move to the cities; rural-urban wage differentials are large. The cities, however, exercise other attractions, which prove strong enough to overcome the disincentives of probable underemployment or unemployment for numerous migrants. This memorandum assesses the motives and characteristics of the typical migrant, insofar as they can be determined, and discusses the outlook for the rapid urbanization of Black African countries.

Statistics on rural-urban migration are sketchy at best, and few surveys of migrants are available. The detailed information and analysis of migrants' attitudes and motivations presented here are based on three studies done in the richer countries of West Africa -- Ghana, Nigeria, and the Ivory Coast. The survey made in Ghana in 1963 is the most detailed and comes closer to

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being a random sample than the others. It covered nearly 17,000 individuals -- whole village populations in each of the major regions and predominantly immigrant neighborhoods in Accra and other cities. A less detailed and smaller survey of five representative villages in Western Nigeria in 1967 produced remarkably similar information on migrant motives and attitudes. The role of education as a determinant in rural-urban migration in the Ivory Coast was examined in a survey of villagers there in 1967. The remarkable congruence in the findings of these studies implies that they are indicative of the characteristics and motivations of rural-urban migrants more generally.

Estimates of Urban Growth

1. Black Africa's urban population probably is just over 10% of total population, compared with a world average of about 25%. In the past two decades, however, urbanization in Black Africa has proceeded more rapidly than elsewhere, and the rate appears to be accelerating.* (Table 1 illustrates the trend). The urban population probably is increasing 3 to 4 times faster than the rural population, or 6% to 12% a year in most countries.

2. Levels of urbanization vary widely (see Table 2). West Africa has the highest proportion, reflecting, in part, longer contacts with the Western world and relatively higher levels of economic development. Urbanization in the coastal states is much greater than in the poorer inland

* *Relatively few Black African countries have had reliable censuses; practically none have had two or more within a reasonably short period. Thus all estimates of urban population and urban growth rates are based on a combination of census data, sample surveys, and educated guesses. There is, nevertheless, a surprising amount of agreement among local officials and observers as to the rapidity of African urbanization.*

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Table 1

Africa: Estimated Number of Cities
of over 100,000 Population

	<u>All Africa</u>	<u>Black Africa ^{a/}</u>
1930s	21	4
1940s	39	13
1950s	72	34
1960	85	44
1967	111	62
1970	114	64

a. Excluding Southern Africa, Egypt, and North Africa.

Table 2

Estimated Level of Urbanization
in Black Africa

	<u>Percent of Total Population</u>			
	<u>Cities with Populations of 20,000+</u>		<u>Cities with Populations of 100,000+</u>	
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1967</u>
West Africa	10.7	11.7	7.3	8.8
Middle Africa	8.4	11.4	4.7	7.5
East Africa	5.6	7.6	3.1	4.9

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countries like Mali and Niger. Middle Africa shows somewhat the same pattern; landlocked and backward Chad has a much lower level than Gabon or either of the Congos. Levels of urbanization are generally lower in East Africa. Ethiopia, the most populous country, probably has only 5% of its population in cities, which lowers the region's average. The low levels in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika -- well under 10% -- are explained in part by past colonial restrictions on movement to cities.

3. In most countries, the growth of the first-ranking city is far outpacing other urban communities. Those primate cities that were relatively small at independence are growing particularly rapidly (see Table 3 and Figure 1). In the early 1950s only two Black African cities were thought to have 400,000 or more inhabitants; by the early 1960s, there were five, and toward the end of the decade, eight.

4. The natural increase in population accounts for perhaps one-third to one-half of annual urban growth. In almost all Black African cities, death rates appear to be considerably lower than in the countryside both because most urban populations are relatively young and because sanitation and public health facilities are better.* In many cases, urban birth rates are as high as rural ones, although in a few richer cities and more advanced countries, urban birth rates are beginning to decline.

5. A 1967 sample survey in Western Nigeria found that one-fourth of the rural households had one or more family members living permanently outside the local village; of these, three-fourths were in major cities and 10% in smaller towns. As early as 1960, well under half the population of Ghana's three major cities had been born there, and many of these were the young

* For example, a 1960/61 sample survey in Senegal found identical birth rates of 47 per 1,000 in urban and rural zones, but an urban death rate of only 16 compared with a rural rate of 29. Thus the natural increase in urban areas would be more than 3% per annum; in the rural areas less than 2%.

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Table 3

Estimated Growth of Selected
Black African Cities

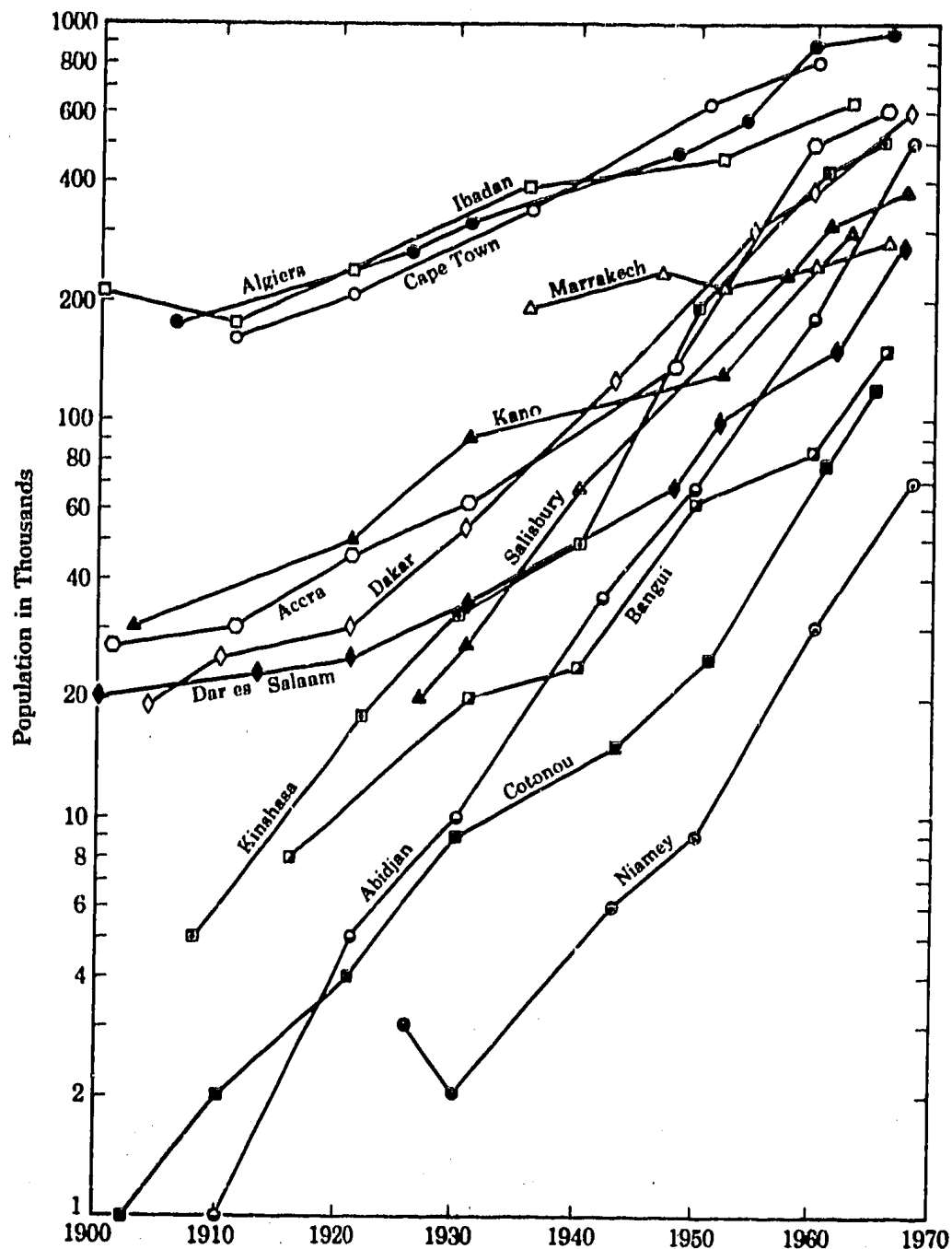
<u>Town</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population (Thousand Persons)</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population (Thousand Persons)</u>	<u>Average Annual Growth Rate (Percent)</u>
Abidjan	1950	69	1968	500	11.6
Accra	1960	492	1970	846	5.6
Cotonou	1961	78	1965	120	11.4
Dakar	1960	374	1968	600	6.1
Dar es Salaam	1962	150	1967	273	12.7
Kinshasa	1960	450	1970	1,323 <u>a/</u>	11.4
Kitwe	1963	90	1968	132	8.0
Libreville	1961	30	1968	62	10.9
Lusaka	1958	58	1969	343	17.5
Mogadiscio	1953	61	1966	170	8.2
Monrovia	1953	27	1967	100	9.8
Nairobi	1957	222	1969	478	6.6
Niamey	1960	30	1968	71	11.4

a. Including foreigners numbering about 200,000.

children of recent migrants. A detailed survey of rural-urban migrants in Ghana, made a few years later, found that about 14% of the men and 10% of the women considered members of village families were actually long-term migrants to the city, and that roughly the same proportions of the village young people intended to move to town soon. Rural-urban migration seems even more common in

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Figure 1. Growth of Some African Cities



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the Ivory Coast, and Abidjan is among the continent's fastest growing cities. A 1964 survey found that one-third of the African population had lived there less than three years and one-fifth less than one year. Other studies of Ivorian villages suggest the trend is accelerating. According to a 1967 survey, the following percentages of the 15-29 age group born in the village had left for town:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Percent of Males</u>	<u>Percent of Females</u>
15-19	38	23
20-24	38	20
25-29	24	15

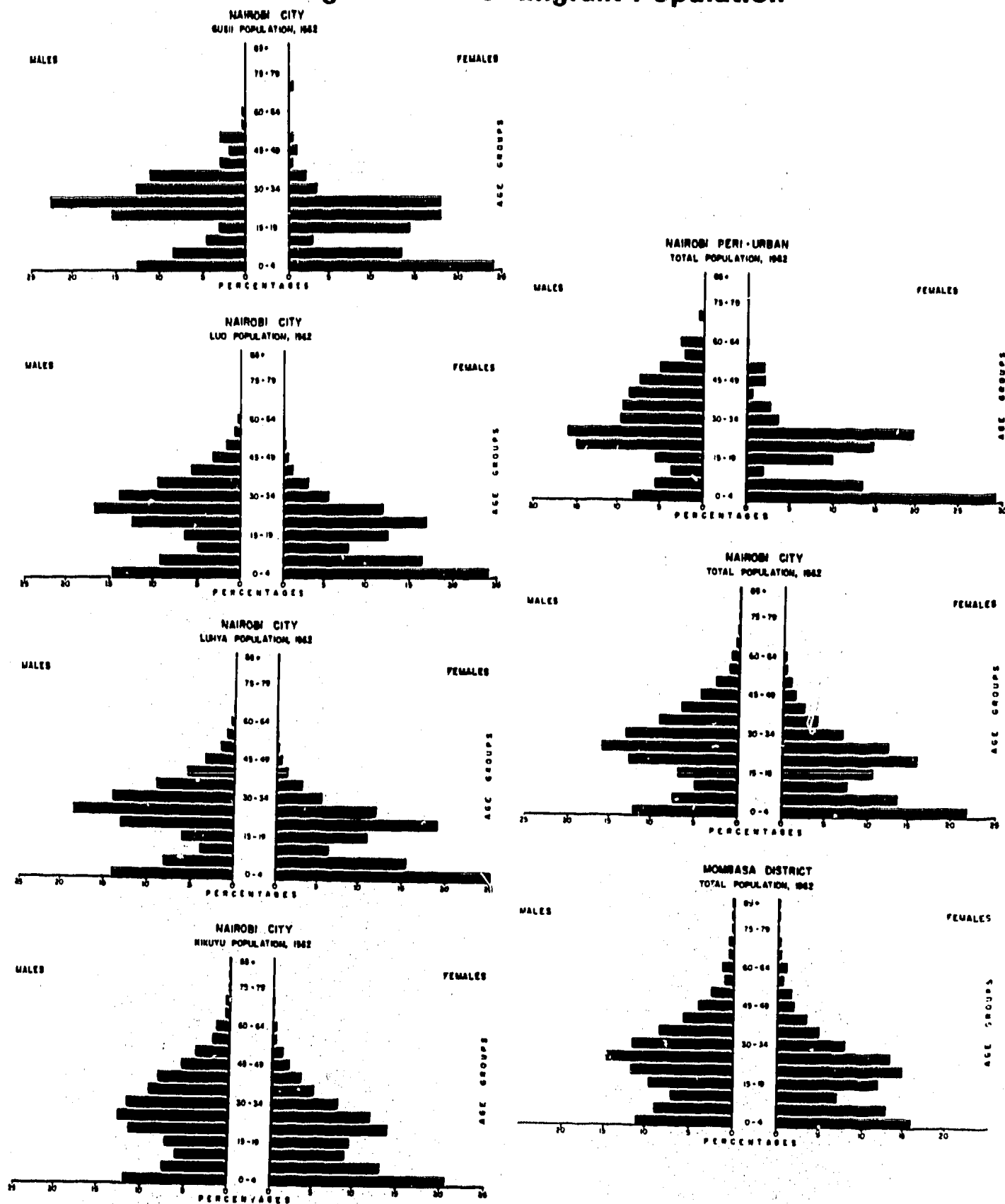
6. In its early stages, rural-urban migration consists mainly of young men who come for relatively short stays. Later, the proportion of women increases and more migrants become permanent residents. West African coastal cities generally reflect this later stage; the proportion of women migrants is higher and social opposition to the migration of village girls is easing. In East Africa, sizable rural-urban migration is a more recent phenomenon. The urban age-sex population pyramids in Kenya, for example, show great distortion between the ages of 15 and 54, reflecting the large influx of working age men and a more recent and smaller influx of young women (see Figure 2).

Who Migrates?

7. Representatives of all age groups and conditions of life are found among the rural-urban migrants, but the migrant typically is young -- 15 to 29 -- usually male, and frequently better educated than his stay-at-home contemporaries. Surveys in Ghana found two fairly distinct streams of rural-urban migrants: one came from relatively prosperous and modernized villages, the other from more distant and backward areas. Their basic

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Figure 2. Selected Population Pyramids Indicating the Size of Migrant Population

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characteristics cover practically the whole span of economic conditions in Black Africa, and the findings in Ghana are thus probably representative of most of the area.

8. In Ghana, the larger stream consists of young, relatively well-educated people attracted to the town by its greater social and economic opportunities. Among this group, the propensity to migrate is inversely correlated with distance between home village and town, and directly correlated with economic condition of the household. The larger the home town, the more education, and the greater number of relatives in the target area, the greater the tendency is to move to the city. This group reflects the influence of urban culture on nearby areas so that the more the family and village have been in contact with modern city ways, the more they are likely to furnish rural-urban migrants. If the home village is fairly large, it is more apt to have schools, and if the family is fairly well off, it is more likely to provide longer education for the children. Another important factor for this type of migrant is his previous acquaintance with city life gained by visiting relatives there. Studies of rural-urban migration in the Ivory Coast and in Western Nigeria suggest similar characteristics and influences at work on migrants in those areas.

9. The second stream of migrants in Ghana has some quite different characteristics. These people come from the very poor and backward areas; education is a less important factor in migration, as is distance of home village from target area. This stream also consists mainly of young men, but older men are more numerous than in the first stream. Seasonal or relatively short-term migration is more apparent in this group for among them the rural "push" appears to be more of a factor than the urban "pull." In Ghana, this group comes largely from the north where living conditions are very bad -- droughts, population pressure on the land, and seasonal famines are often cited as reasons for moving -- and where a striking contrast exists between living conditions at home and in the richer target areas. This group appears to put more emphasis on job opportunities as an attractive aspect of the town

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compared with respondents from the relatively richer southern areas. A similar but less clearly discernible division of migrants into a relatively well-off and semi-modernized group and a much poorer and more traditional group is revealed by studies in the Ivory Coast. Many migrants from poor and overcrowded areas of East Africa also appear to fit into this second stream.

10. Village attitudes toward rural-urban migration are also important determinants of the pace of this movement. Surveys of Ghanaians and Nigerians found strong approval for young men and considerable support for young women going to town. The reasons given -- the social status of farming is low, and civilization or modern ways are desirable and are found only in the cities -- probably apply in much of Black Africa.

11. More than 80% of Ghanaian villagers questioned favored young men going to town, at least for a while. Surprisingly little emphasis was put on economic benefits, compared with what might be termed the modernizing aspects of town life (see Table 4). Western Nigerian villagers endorsed the idea of migration even more, perhaps because that part of Africa has long been among the most highly urbanized. Nearly 90% approved of boys and men going to town; of those who did, 58% cited the best reason as "to be civilized, wise, acquire new ideas, etc." Only 12% cited the chance to improve living standards as a prime reason, but an additional 22% mentioned the desirability of urban jobs. The similarity of these responses in Nigeria and Ghana probably reflects approximately equal familiarity with town life, and roughly the same levels of wealth and education among the villages of the two areas surveyed.

12. Although a comparable survey of urbanites in Western Nigeria is lacking, they too probably would match the Ghanaian town dwellers in endorsing rural-urban migration even more strongly than the rural folk. Significantly, urban folk put even more emphasis on the chance to obtain knowledge and sophistication in town than do their country cousins. A contempt for "village hicks" is certainly not limited to the developed world, nor is the delight in sophistication.

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Table 4

Ghana: Responses to the Question,
 "Is It a Good Thing for Boys and Men
 To Go to the Town, for a While?" "Why?" a/

	Percent of Responses	
	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Urban Area</u>
Yes	83	85
No	14	8
Other, qualified answers	3	7
Migration is good		
To obtain knowledge and ideas, or to become sophisticated	53	77
To raise living standards	33	15
To further education	7	10
To send goods to the village	2	2
Migration is bad		
Migrants may become criminals	11	9
Family suffers from their loss	7	5
They may forget their traditions	5	6
Farming will suffer	5	2

a. Totals exceed 100% because some respondents gave several answers.

13. Support for girls and young women moving to town is considerably weaker but nevertheless surprisingly strong for people that tend to emphasize a traditional role and early marriage for girls. The chief fear is that they will become corrupted if not well supervised. Again, the town dwellers were far more receptive to the idea than their village counterparts (see Table 5).

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Table 5

Ghana and Nigeria: Responses
to the Question, "Is It a Good Thing
for Girls and Young Women
To Go to the Town for a While?" "Why?" a/

	Percent of Responses		
	Ghana		Nigeria
	Rural Area	Urban Area	Rural Area
Yes	52	68	55
No	44	22	45
Other, qualified answers	4	10	--
Migration is good			
To obtain knowledge, or become sophisticated	38	62	
To get better jobs, raise standard of living or supply village with goods	18	11	
To find a husband	11	8	
Migration is bad			
Migrants may become prostitutes	40	27	
Family suffers from the loss	4	4	
They may forget their traditions	5	2	
Farming will suffer	2	2	

a. Totals exceed 100% because some respondents
gave several answers.

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14. Answers of both men and women strongly suggest that the gulf between rural and urban life is far greater for women than men, and indicate that many young women are increasingly aware of it. Regional differences also show that the relatively modernized rural areas tend to favor female migration to the cities more than do traditional and more backward areas. In southern Ghana, long used to contact with cities, more than two-thirds of households favored some degree of migration for their women. This proportion dropped to 39% in Ashanti, which has stronger rural family ties and is relatively well off; and to only 29% in the more traditional and poverty-stricken north. Many feared the cultural and generation gap would be widened if girls lived in town for any length of time: "Those who stay rather longer (in the towns) tend to think they know better than their mothers and are a little difficult to handle."

Causes of Rural-Urban Migration

15. The reasons people cite for moving from farm or village to the city fall into two main classes: economic and social. While almost all specify economic opportunity as a major ingredient, they also cite fun, freedom, status, civilization, health, and education as important.* In analysing these reasons, it is usual to distinguish between rural "push" and urban "pull," although in actuality, these factors are almost impossible to disentangle. The decision to move is based on an overall comparison of the two worlds in terms of opportunities and attractions.

Economic Factors

16. Rural "push" often involves pressure on the land resulting from population increases, fragmentation and subdivision of family lands, stagnant or falling yields, and low returns to the farmer. This kind of push is strongest in densely

* *"Amongst the interviewers, as amongst their respondents, more attention was paid to contrasts in entertainment than to any other topic, the contrasts in this respect serving to epitomize the rural-urban choice."* J.C. Caldwell, *African Rural-Urban Migration*, New York, 1969, p. 31.

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populated and impoverished areas such as the Mossi lands in Upper Volta, where migration, both permanent and seasonal, has become traditional. Other examples include much of Ibo land in Nigeria, northern Ghana, the Luo and Kikuyu areas in Kenya, the Bamileke area in Cameroon, and the more densely populated parts of Uganda. Where land hunger is less acute or non-existent, rural "push" appears to depend more heavily on a negative attitude toward farming described by a Nigerian report as "the present mental picture of farming as an occupation associated with illiteracy, a low level of income, heavy manual labor, and a lack of social amenities"

17. When Nigerian farmers were asked about occupations for their sons, more than 60% said they would not recommend farming; the major reasons were that it was tedious and not lucrative. Their children in village primary schools voted even more strongly against farming as an occupation; less than 30% of those questioned chose farming for themselves. Many that did appeared to be repeating recent school lessons, which emphasized the usefulness and dignity of agriculture, yet even they often revealed latent feelings of inferiority about farming and thought in terms of a "better" job for their children.* The children who would not choose farming usually cited the hard work and unpleasant conditions.**

* A school boy's essay on why he would choose farming included the following: "The work of a farmer is a profitable one because he grows ooooo By selling this he is able to provide adequate food for his family, he is able to maintain his child in secondary school until he gets a good job, until he becomes an eminent person in the society. His father will be proud of him and no one will be bold enough to say 'there goes the poor farmer's son.'"

** For example, "a farmer works in the sun and has poor sales of crops"; "it is an occupation that needs much labor with little profit"; "farming is a very hard work"; "farmers are always dirty"; and "farmers do not wear fine clothes like teachers, clerks, and doctors."

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18. These responses point out one of the most fundamental rural-urban differences -- the economic contrast between them. Approximately 80% of Black Africans are basically subsistence farmers whose productivity is low and who barely get by. Even when they engage in some cash cropping, the gap between their earnings and urban wages is very wide. In the Ivory Coast the estimated average rural income is less than 10% that of the average urban income*; in Nigeria, unskilled urban workers earn more than twice as much as farmers; and in Kenya, per capita income varies greatly between the major urban areas and the poorer provinces, which contribute a growing stream of migrants.** In Ghana, income per head in Accra, the capital and major city, was estimated for 1960 at about four times that of the Volta region and six times that of the northern region.

19. The gap between farmer and urban wage-earner is widening throughout much of Black Africa, in many cases because market prices for agricultural products have failed to keep pace with rising prices elsewhere in the economy. Moreover, most Black African States have set minimum wages in the modern sector -- government, industry, and so on -- and periodically raise them. The Ivory Coast, for example, raised minimum wages 10% in mid-1969 and an additional 25% in January 1970. Thus, real wages of the urban employed tend to rise despite rising unemployment in urban areas as illustrated by estimates of wages and employment in the

* That is, 27,000 CFA francs to 270,000 CFA francs, the equivalent of \$81 to \$821. These figures probably do not take subsistence production and services fully into account, but the difference is nevertheless considerable.

** Estimated per capita income (monetary only) in 1962 was as follows:

	<u>£</u>	or	<u>US \$</u>
Nairobi area	253		208
High Valley	23		64
Coast Province	39		109
Central Province	12		34
Nyanza Province	6		17
Southern Province	5		14

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non-agricultural sector in three East African countries, shown in Table 6. In general, urban wages in Black Africa probably average at least 3 to 4 times the earnings of the average farmer and this disparity is sufficient to attract many rural-urban migrants even though many fail to find good jobs.

20. In short, the rural-urban income differential appears to be one of the most important factors in the pull of the cities. Many go to the cities hoping for work even when their chances are poor. Trends in migration and in job creation in the modern sector over the past decade indicate the importance of this hope for a job in the migrant's decision to move. From the sketchy evidence available, the number of jobs in the non-agricultural sector has grown much more slowly than the number of job-seeking migrants. Indeed, there is some evidence that when jobs are created, even more people tend to be attracted to the city and the number of unemployed thus increases.*

Socio-Economic Factors

21. The slow growth of jobs compared with the rapid growth of cities indicates that economic factors alone cannot explain rural-urban migration and that the attraction of the city is in many cases great enough to overcome economic disincentives. This situation is graphically illustrated by Nigerian villagers' responses to the question: If your son could work as a farmer for £10 per month or as a city clerk at £15 a month, which would you advise? More than 10% chose the city life at half the income. Their reasons were categorized as follows:

* The concept of unemployment, in the Western sense, has less meaning for Black Africa where so many are partly employed, underemployed, or self-employed in petty trading and other services.

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Table 6
Estimated Real Wage and Employment Indexes
for the Non-Agricultural Sectors
of Zambia, Kenya, and Tanzania a/

Year	Zambia		Kenya		Tanzania	
	Real Wages	Employment	Real Wages	Employment	Real Wages	Employment
1958	100	100		100	100	100
1959	110	95	100	100	114	96
1960	115	93	106	102	124	93
1961	125	90	111	98	131	104
1962	128	88	115	97	166	101
1963	136	86	N.A.	91	215	91
1964	155	91	N.A.	110	233	95

a. Based on the International Labour Organization Yearbook of Labor Statistics and the UN Statistical Papers, Series K, No. 3, 1967.

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	<u>Percent</u>
He needs to be more enlightened and civilized	19
He can further his education	11
Non-agricultural jobs are more secure and regular	58
Farming is tedious and rough	12

22. For those who have had some education, the socio-economic attractions of the cities are paramount. In most of Black Africa, schooling is usually thought of as preparation for predominantly urban occupations. Frequently respondents explained to surveyors that someone's migration to town was obvious or inevitable "because he had been to school" or that another resided in the village as a farmer "because he had not been to school." In surveyed areas in Ghana, only 17% of the men and 26% of the women who had received secondary school or technical education had no plans to migrate. The rest either had migrated, at least for a time, or were planning to do so.

23. A survey of young people, aged 15 to 29, belonging to Ivory Coast villages showed that more than 60% of those who had left the village had completed primary school, whereas only about 10% were illiterates. Many were headed for further schooling, which was obtainable only in towns. Furthermore, many had remained in the final class of primary school for as long as three years to retake the exams for secondary school,* and of the children still in primary school, 13% of the boys and 7% of the girls were 15 or older. The extent of the migration of young people aged 15 to 19 is shown below:

* In October 1966, more than a third of the pupils in the top primary grade were repeating the year.

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	<u>Percent</u>	
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Remaining in village:		
In school	13	7
Family workers	29	18
Other	8	31 <u>a/</u>
Having left:		
For primary school	10	4
For secondary school	18	5
Other	22	35

a. Mostly married and working in husband's family.

24. There are other less tangible factors affecting rural-urban migration, which might be summarized as the bright lights and bustle of the city. They attract the illiterate as well as the educated. When asked to name things that make village life unpleasant and that make city life pleasant, Ghanaians heavily stressed the contrast in facilities and entertainment available, as shown in Tables 7 and 8.

25. Rural-urban migration is a function of the contrast between the two environments in terms of income, job opportunities in the modern sector, facilities, and entertainment. The social attraction seems so great that a decrease in the economic pulls probably would not reduce migration proportionately. On the other hand, an improvement in urban economic opportunities would certainly speed up the movement to the cities.

Impact of Migration on the Source Areas

26. In Ghana, at least, the impact of rural-urban migration on the source villages appears almost universally beneficial. The most tangible benefit is the rather surprising flow of money from the migrants to their home villages. One-third of the rural households surveyed received money from family members in town, and 8% got more

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Table 7

Ghana: Responses to the Question,
 "Name Some Things That Make
 Village Life Unpleasant" a/

	Percent of Responses	
	<u>Rural Survey</u>	<u>Urban Survey</u>
Economic		
No work, or none suitable for the educated	32	22
Crop failures	7	9
Facilities		
Lack of facilities or amenities, general	18	20
Inadequate water supply	37	37
Poor roads and communications	31	20
Shortage of consumer goods	33	16
Poor health facilities	21	20
Disease	18	18
Lack of electricity	19	23
Poor schools	5	5
Entertainment		
No movies, bars, nightclubs, dances, and the like	38	24
Way of life		
Life is dull or uncivilized	16	19
Social		
Family pressures, conflicts, and the like	12	10

a. Totals exceed 100% because some respondents gave several answers.

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Table 8

Ghana: Responses to the Question,
 "Name Some Things That Make
 Town Life Pleasant" a/

	Percent of Responses	
	<u>Villagers</u>	<u>Urbanites</u>
Entertainment		
In general, including holidays, radios, and the like	46	48
Movies, bars, dances, and the like	37	50
Life is exciting	20	20
Facilities		
Better shopping, transport, and cultural facilities	71	57
Water and electricity	54	34
Health facilities	19	16
Educational facilities	6	7
Economic		
Better chance of a job, higher wages	40	36
Other economic	1	6
Personal		
Higher prestige	10	9
Freedom from traditional ties	3	7

a. Totals exceed 100% because some respondents gave several answers.

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money in this way than from all rural sources combined. While less than half the Ghanaian migrants sent money in the first hectic period of finding a job and getting established in town, about two-thirds did so after they had settled in. Altogether, probably more than 40% of all urban households were assisting village family members. Most of the money was sent to parents, usually to help in maintaining the household, but in many cases for education of younger family members. The average received by the rural households was about the equivalent of \$140 per year, excluding goods sent from town and money and presents brought home by the migrant on visits. The total volume of these cash flows is estimated at more than \$40 million for 1965, or about 3% of national income. In terms of cash available in the largely subsistence village economies, these amounts are substantial. Moreover, to the villagers they are in many cases of critical importance. Nearly a third of the recipient families felt they would be "very poor" without money from urban relatives.

27. Other benefits perceived by the villagers and town dwellers alike include the transmission of new ideas, goods, and information to the village. Most migrants return to the village for visits, though the frequency often diminishes with length of stay in town. Many migrants eventually return to the village: some to retire and live on their savings, others because they failed to make a living in town. Nearly 10% of the population of the surveyed villages in Ghana were permanent returnees from long stays in urban areas. Fully 75% of the migrants interviewed in the cities hoped or expected to return to the village and to have built a house there by the time they retired. While these expectations are probably optimistic, a third of the migrants had already built a house in the village or added rooms to the ancestral house at the time of the Ghana survey.

28. Not all migrants retain these ties, and the number who rarely or never visit their home villages and who fully intend to stay in town appears to be rising. This situation will almost certainly continue to grow as more migrants come to town in childhood and retain few or no family ties with the village. Nevertheless, in Ghana at

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least, the rural-urban links remain strong and serve to further modernization and the transition to a cash economy in the villages.

29. Elsewhere in Africa, especially in poorer areas where migration is more a function of rural push, the ties between town and village are probably weaker. In these cases, migration may serve to reduce the shortage of jobs or land in the villages, and migrant remittances undoubtedly improve village living conditions, but distance and poverty probably reduce the impact of city ways on village life.

30. Since colonial days, official concern has been expressed about migration's possible adverse impact on source areas. While some disagreement remains as to the net impact, most observers agree that the villagers are usually not adversely affected; the remaining workers usually take up the slack so that local output does not decline, and the migrant's remittances increase village income.* In some cases, the migration of a sizable share of the able-bodied men does result in a decline of cash cropping. Where this decline is documentable, as in Mossi country, it is due largely to seasonal migration in search of more remunerative work. In general, migration, whether seasonal or long term, appears to have either no effect or a net beneficial effect on the source areas. It is economically rational and serves to spread new ideas and new goals into the hinterland.

Migrants in the City

31. Almost all migrants come to the city with the hope of finding work.** They usually stay with a relative or friend from whom they expect to learn how to get along in the new environment and who will help them get a job. In interviews with such migrants, the element of luck was frequently

* Where migrants constitute nearly half of the able-bodied village males, economic and social problems are likely to be created, as in Luo country and in parts of Lesotho.

** Those who do not are students or would-be students preparing for eventual jobs, or members of earlier migrants' families joining the breadwinner.

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stressed, and family or tribal ties were considered critically important assets in landing a good job.

32. Those who fail to find a suitable job during this initial period eventually may be pushed out by their hosts who have other pressing obligations. In many cases, the migrant stays with a succession of family members or friends. These city hosts appear torn between the traditional requirement of offering food and shelter to family or tribal members and the needs of their own nuclear families.* The guest often performs household services, runs errands, and so on to help pay for his keep. Some stay on almost indefinitely as semi-servants. Those who cannot and who fail to find regular work tend to join the floating population of the urban poor. They live as best they can, taking odd jobs, doing a little trading, joining the army of self-appointed car guards or errand boys, or becoming petty criminals and prostitutes.

33. Some, of course, return home in defeat. Their numbers are not very large, however, in relation to the total stream of migrants. In Ghana, those most prone to giving up the job search and going home appear to have come from the more distant and backward areas. Their strongest motive for migrating was the need for money, and it seemed to be easier for them to decide to go home if they found no job. Moreover, they probably were more willing to take rural jobs -- cocoa harvesting, for example -- and to join the category of seasonal migrants who work predominantly in rural areas.

34. For those who succeed in staying in a city, life seems to come up to original expectations to a surprising degree. In Ghana, about two-thirds of the migrants felt town life was as good or better than they had expected, although few found their real income to be as great as they hoped. It came as a shock to most that cheap housing was unobtainable and that all food and services had to be paid

* A study of such situations in Nairobi and Lagos illuminates this conflict and describes the experiences of unsuccessful job seekers. Hosts often reported that they became fed up with their guests only after they had turned down jobs that did not meet their expectations.

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for. Thus the money surpluses they had expected -- for saving, for entertainment, for other than subsistence needs -- often failed to materialize. Nevertheless, they expressed relatively little disappointment with city life. Even among the villagers, 43% felt that people who move to the city generally find life as satisfactory as they hope.

35. In Ghana the degree of disappointment with town life appeared proportional to the socio-economic gulf between the migrant's native area and the town. Thus the strain and frustrations of town life were greatest for the migrant who came from the traditional, poor, and mainly subsistence areas, where education and knowledge of urban conditions were lowest. Nevertheless, partly because the most discontented migrants usually return to the village, the great bulk of migrants in the city lived much the kind of life they expected. Even among the least successful who felt very pressed by the need for more money, the failure to earn enough was frequently offset by the other, previously underestimated, compensations in living in a city. As time goes by, the migrants seem to value these aspects of urban life -- the diversions, the bars, and the general variety of life -- more and more highly. They also often mention the lack of village constraints and even the relative anonymity of urban life as good points.

36. The changes in values produced in the rural-urban migrant by the conditions of city life are part of the general transformation from a traditional to a modern society. In Ghana, at least, this process involves changing attitudes toward family size, status, and work. Financial strains militate strongly against polygyny and against large numbers of children. In the village, prestige and even wealth flowed from the possession of several wives and numerous children -- all of whom could work at raising food. In the city, most migrants are shocked at the cost of food and housing. They also are more inclined to send children to school, which adds to costs, and find that educated city children can successfully demand lots of expensive things. Finally, having many wives and children is not rewarded with social prestige in the city; instead many townsmen look with disdain

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on these "bush" practices. Thus polygyny is much less common in Ghana's towns and the average number of children is lower than in the villages, a phenomenon not yet widespread in Black Africa.

37. In southern Ghana, and probably in the richer parts of the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and similar Black African areas, rural-urban migration tends to be a self-reinforcing and modernizing influence on the population. As schools and knowledge of town life spread among the villages, migration increases and tends to change the village economy by bringing more cash into it and to change village society by introducing urban manners and values. These values, in turn, tend to increase the stream of rural-urban migrants.

38. It is much less clear whether this process applies to rural-urban migration from the more traditional and poorer areas. The number of migrants who return to such villages very dissatisfied with their urban experience probably discourages many would-be migrants. On the other hand, the rural "push" factors appear to be greater in the really poor areas, and money sent back by successful migrants is of greater importance to the village.

Impact on the City

39. The growing stream of migrants into Black Africa's cities tends to create or worsen existing urban problems. Shanty towns on the fringes of the city spring up almost overnight, and housing conditions in general deteriorate from overcrowding. Even relatively strenuous efforts to build decent public housing are overwhelmed by the influx of new migrants, as in Abidjan. Water and sewage services rarely if ever keep up with urban growth. Moreover, the expanding city population demands more schools, health facilities, and other social-welfare services.

40. These urban problems, common to almost all the poor world's cities, probably do not appear so severe to the rural-urban migrants as they do to the outside observer or to the Westernized urban officials trying to cope with them. Crowded shantytowns may not seem so dreadful to the migrants.

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To many, the very overcrowding and confusion epitomize the exciting bustle and variety of town life. In any event, the migrant who stays in the city almost always has an option to leave and chooses not to.

41. As rural-urban migration continues, however, it may create more unmanageable problems. Unemployment is likely to be among the more pressing. In many Black African cities, the number of educated job seekers is already high. It is most unlikely that new jobs can be created fast enough to keep pace with the graduates of the expanding school systems, and the number of dissatisfied unemployed is almost certain to grow. Moreover, the traditional urban sector is also hard pressed to absorb the influx of illiterate or semi-schooled migrants who engage in petty trading, odd jobs, and other marginal pursuits.

Interaction with Government Policies

42. Some government policies indirectly induce rural-urban migration. The emphasis on education found throughout Black Africa, for example, contributes heavily to the flow of migrants. Measures that tend to widen the disparity between rural and urban conditions, such as high government salaries or heavy taxes on agricultural exports, also tend to have the same effect.

43. The burgeoning of city populations in turn often affects government policies. In general, the greater political awareness and volatility of city folk tend to induce governments to pay relatively more attention to their interests. Furthermore, most governments are run by largely urbanized civil servants whose sympathies and concerns are more in line with those of the urban population. Thus fiscal policies and spending priorities tend to favor urban interests more than a dispassionate economic planner might wish, and the agricultural sector is often left to fend for itself. Moreover, rural-urban migrants often increase the demand for food and imported consumer goods, but the migrants rarely produce for export. This in turn can lead to balance-of-payments difficulties. Even the process of economic development itself tends to contribute to rural-urban migration. New jobs in

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manufacturing and construction, for example, are usually in urban areas. If urban wages or jobs increase, the disparity between city and countryside often widens and induces still more migration.

44. A number of Black African governments, alarmed at the problems related to urban-rural migration, have attempted to slow it to more manageable proportions. A few, such as Guinea and the Central African Republic, have tried forcibly expelling the visibly unemployed, with little or no long-term success. Others -- Ghana and Uganda are among the most recent examples -- have deported sizable numbers of foreigners to make more jobs available to nationals, although this probably induces a greater influx of job seekers from rural areas.

Conclusions

45. Urbanization varies widely among Black African countries, but it appears to be increasing almost everywhere. Rural-urban migration is responsible for much of this growth. There are two distinct streams of migrants: one is from the towns and villages near the big cities where schools and other aspects of modernization already have penetrated rural life; the other is from the more distant and backward areas where the contrast between village and city conditions is stark.

46. The movement to the cities is due to factors varied enough so that attempts to stem it would be unlikely to succeed. Both economic and social causation contribute to the flow of migrants. Rural poverty and stagnation, often deepened by rapid population growth, serve to push many young people out of the villages in search of work. In most of Black Africa, urban wages are far higher than rural incomes, and this disparity attracts many to the cities. Even when the economic pull of the cities is reduced by high levels of urban unemployment, the social attractions are usually strong enough to draw rural migrants.

47. Especially for young people who have had some schooling, the status and fun of living in a city are of paramount importance. The city is

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widely viewed as the center of civilization and enlightenment, while farming is considered hard and unrewarding work suitable only for the uneducated. The health and educational facilities in urban areas, as well as the bars, bright lights, and general bustle, are also attractions. Government policies often increase the attractiveness of cities. The failure to improve living conditions in the very poor and backward areas contributes to migration. However, the provision of village schools and modern amenities, such as roads or piped water, often only whets potential migrants' appetites for the urban life.

48. Migration serves to ameliorate poor economic conditions in the source areas when migrants send money or goods to their village relatives. By and large rural-urban migration seems to have little adverse economic impact on the villagers left behind. Furthermore, it probably is a necessary condition for modernization in all its aspects, from economic development to the breakdown of tribal barriers and the formation of national consciousness.

49. The stream of migrants adds considerably to existing urban problems. Housing shortages and pressures on health and educational facilities are general. To the extent that governments attempt to meet such problems, funds are diverted from other, and more directly productive, investment projects. In some cases, urbanization also contributes to balance-of-payments difficulties by increasing the demand for imported consumer goods.

50. The growing number of disappointed job seekers in almost all black African cities may eventually cause even greater problems for their governments. As tastes and values are altered by the urban experience, the level of political awareness among the migrants rises. Thus, if constant exposure to the ways of the urban elite -- cars, big houses, and fancy dress -- causes strong resentment among the urban poor, social and political stability may be affected, but these are potential,

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not actual problems. While some signs of such discontent have already appeared,* the bulk of Black Africa's rural-urban migrants seem to find their living conditions more satisfying than the village life they left behind.

* Growing shortages of consumer goods combined with increasing criticism of official corruption certainly contributed to Nkrumah's overthrow. Public rejoicing at the downfall of many political leaders after the first Nigerian coup was genuine and widespread.

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